

Mount Horeb Area School District Alumni Endowment for Academic Excellence

Assessment Review – Fall 2015 – Spring 2016

Based on the *Policy and Procedures* written to implement the Alumni Endowment in Fall 2009, this initial five-year review was carried out by MHASD personnel, community members, and the initiating committee from the class of 1959. This report summarizes the outcomes/recommendations from this review.

District's Ownership of the Alumni Endowment for Academic Excellence

Oversight of the Endowment, its visibility and viability in the community and within the District, must be provided by the District Superintendent. Currently the Superintendent is Debra Klein; Steve Salerno becomes District Superintendent July 1, 2016.

Based on this review, expanded eligibility and a modified selection committee as well as a more informative website for the Mount Horeb Area School District Alumni Endowment for Academic Excellence must occur. These recommendations should inform the community as well as those directly involved in the District about the Endowment and its purposes. To ensure the Endowment's vitality and sustainability, the Endowment needs to be viewed as an Alumni Endowment, not only an Endowment by the Class of 1959. The intent of the Endowment is to enrich students' academic experiences and which continues to grow through gifts/memorials.

Gifts to the Endowment should be acknowledged by the District Superintendent in addition to the Madison Community Foundation (MCF). The District's acknowledgement can include examples of how the Endowment enhances the students' experiences. These examples can be updated annually to reflect current projects funded through an Endowment grant.

Enhance visibility of Endowment on the District's website

Concern: Information on the Endowment, its funding cycle, previous recipients and projects funded are **not** available on the District's website. Information previously posted has disappeared. Such information can provide a historical record of the Endowment. To address this issue, several actions need to be implemented.

1. List of prior recipients, title of grant/project funded, and amount of funding should be updated annually when grants are awarded and projects completed. The chair of the grant selection committee in conjunction with the District's webmaster should do.
2. A current application form needs to be continuously available on the District's website. This posting is the responsibility of the chair of the grant selection committee in conjunction with the District's webmaster.
3. A written one-page summary with a picture of the project should be posted on the Endowment's website within 45-days of the project's completion. If possible, this information

should be posted for all Projects funded through the Endowment; the first grants were awarded in 2010 for the 2010-2011 academic year.

4. The website for the Endowment on the District's site should be easily identifiable, providing a robust overview of the Endowment, including its purpose and how to contribute to the Endowment including the link to the Madison Community Foundation on how to do so.
5. Establish a FAQs link about the Endowment to answer/clarify questions individuals may raise regarding the Endowment.
6. Oversight to ensure communication regarding the Alumni Endowment is current, informative, and available through multiple outlets—website, brochures, news release--resides in the Office of the District Superintendent in collaboration with the chair of the Endowment Grants Selection Committee.

Eligibility to apply for Endowment grants

Initial guidelines specify "Priority will be given to supporting group activities, special projects and events involving students in grades 6-12 during the academic year funded."

This review recommends expanding eligibility to include grades K – 12 beginning with the spring 2017 funding/application cycle. The Endowment Grants Selection Committee should reflect this expanded eligibility.

Endowment Grants Selection Committee Membership

Concern: Lack of continuity given the committee's current membership as well as limited visibility for the Endowment on the District's website. Revised committee membership follows:

Endowment Grants Selection Committee Membership

- Middle School Assistant Principal—High School Principal
- Two peer-group selected teachers, preferably one representing the middle school and the other representing the high school
- Guidance counselors-- High school and middle school counselors
- One high school and one middle school student (such as officers of the honor society and/or student council) who are selected by the four other school committee members; and
- Community member(s), school and community involved, selected by eight school committee members.

Members shall serve staggered, three-year terms except for the student members; committee should elect its own chair. For the initial three years, a Principal on the Committee shall chair the Committee. Each committee member's vote shall be equal. Committee members are not eligible for grant funding. If a committee member has a potential conflict of interest regarding an application, that committee member must recuse her/himself from participating in a decision on that application. If funding criteria are not met, the Selection Committee reserves the right not to approve any grants for that year.

Once appointed, the name of each committee member should be linked to the position he/she fills.

Conclusion

The intent of this review has been to ensure that the implementation of the Endowment is consistent with its intended purposes. Such reviews are to be continued at least once each decade. Based on this review, the updated *Policy and Procedures (8/2016) for the Mount Horeb Area School District Alumni Endowment for Academic Excellence* are attached.

Revised March 2016